

Application No. 10/789,156
Response to Office Action

Customer No. 01933

R E M A R K S

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

THE SPECIFICATION

The specification has been amended to correct some minor informalities of which the undersigned has become aware. No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that the amendments to the specification be approved and entered.

THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-21 have been canceled, without prejudice, and claims 22-42 have been added.

New claims 22-42 broadly correspond to claims 1-21, respectively, rewritten to more clearly and positively recite the features of the present invention in better U.S. form, as well as to avoid the use of "means-plus-function" language.

In particular, it is respectfully pointed out that new claim 22 recites the features of the present invention whereby an output unit is provided to output one of a character area identification signal, a photographic area information signal, and a screened halftone information signal based on an output of the first identification unit for each identified area; and whereby a

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recording unit is provided to form an image for each identified area to be a respective color based on the signal output by the output unit for each said identified area, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 40, line 14 to page 46, line 5 (see also Figs. 11, 12, 9A-B and 10A-B).

In addition, it is respectfully pointed out that new independent claim 23 recites the features of the present invention whereby an output unit is provided to output one of a chromatic character area identification signal and an achromatic character area identification signal based on an output of the identification unit for each identified area; and whereby a recording unit is provided to form an image for each identified area with a respective color which corresponds to the signal output by the output unit for each said identified area, as supported by the disclosure in the specification at, for example, page 40, line 14 to page 46, line 5 (see also Figs. 11, 12, 9A-B and 10A-B).

Still further, it is respectfully pointed out that new independent claims 40 and 41 recite color image forming methods corresponding to the color image forming apparatuses of new independent claims 22 and 23.

No new matter has been added, and it is respectfully requested that new claims 22-42 be approved and entered.

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THE PRIOR ART REJECTION

Claims 1-21 were rejected under 35 USC 102 as being anticipated by USP 6,486,981 ("Shimura et al"). This rejection, however, is respectfully traversed with respect to new claims 22-42 as set forth hereinabove.

According to the present invention as recited in new independent claim 22 (and corresponding new method claim 40), a color image forming apparatus is provided which comprises an output unit to output one of a character area identification signal, a photographic area information signal, and a screened halftone information signal based on an output of the first identification unit for each identified area. In addition, according to the present invention as recited in new independent claim 23 (and corresponding new method claim 41), a color image forming apparatus is provided which comprises an output unit to output one of a chromatic character area identification signal and an achromatic character area identification signal based on an output of the identification unit for each identified area. And as recited in each of new independent claims 22 and 23 (and corresponding new method claims 40 and 41), the color image forming apparatus comprises a recording unit to form an image for each identified area to be a respective color based on the signal output by the output unit for each said identified area.

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That is, according to the claimed present invention, a document d which includes a photographic area 2, a screened halftone area 1, color characters 3 and black characters 4 (see Fig. 8) is read by a document reading unit, and each of the areas 1-4 is identified. The result of the identification of each of the areas 1-4 is output with a corresponding color. For example, the screened halftone area 1 may be converted to a cyan area, the photographic area 2 may be converted to a colorless area, the color character area may be converted to a magenta area, and the black character area may be converted to a black area. Then an identification result chart (see Figs. 9A, 9B, 10A and 10B) is formed with areas having colors corresponding to the area identification.

With this structure, the identification result chart may be checked in the manufacturing process, for example, to confirm that the area identification system is working properly, and identification processing may be standardized among manufactured machines.

By contrast, it is respectfully submitted that Shimura et al merely discriminates whether a block expresses color characters, and that the information about the discriminated blocks is merely outputted as coded data and stored in the image memory 27.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Shimura et al clearly does not at all disclose, teach or suggest the feature of

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the claimed present invention whereby the recording unit forms an image for each identified area to be a respective color based on the signal output by the output unit for each said identified area.


Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as recited in each of new independent claims 22, 23, 40 and 41, as well as each of new claims 24-39 and 42 respectively depending therefrom, clearly patentably distinguishes over Shimura et al, under 35 USC 102 as well as under 35 USC 103.

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In view of the foregoing, entry of this Amendment, allowance of the claims and the passing of this application to issue are respectfully solicited.

If the Examiner has any comments, questions, objections or recommendations, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned for prompt action.

Respectfully submitted,


Douglas Holtz
Reg. No. 33,902

Frishauf, Holtz, Goodman & Chick, P.C.
767 Third Avenue - 25th Floor
New York, New York 10017-2023
Tel. No. (212) 319-4900
Fax No. (212) 319-5101

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